

Connecticut General Assembly  
Appropriations Committee  
Public Hearing Testimony STATE LIBRARY BUDGET

February 19, 2023

**Written Testimony on Behalf of the Connecticut State Library H.B. No. 6659.**

My name is Linda Robinson and I serve as President-Elect of the Connecticut Library Consortium (**CLC**). I am writing in support of H.B. 6659 and the maintaining of full funding for the Cooperating Library Service Unit (CLC) line item within the Connecticut State Library budget.

As a school librarian in the quiet corner of Connecticut for over 25 years in multiple school districts, the Connecticut Library Consortium has been a critical component of our school libraries providing continued services to students and teachers. In a part of the state populated by small school districts, limited resources, and few funding options beyond the local tax base, school libraries frequently struggle to maintain high quality services.

What you may not be aware of is that **CLC** helps both school and public libraries save millions of dollars a year. As the primary purchaser for my school libraries, I relied on the discounts they negotiate, and I know my public library did as well. **CLC** also affords a large expanse of professional learning opportunities. All educators need professional support, however in a small school system frequently there is only one librarian with no others to collaborate with on professional learning days. **CLC** offers those learning opportunities to enhance library best practices.

**CLC** may be one of our State's best kept secrets. It is a state legislative program and cooperating library service unit funded by the Connecticut State Library. It helps libraries throughout the state by supporting the purchasing of digital resources, database, and other services at the lowest possible prices. There is no other organization in the state that offers these services to our libraries. In addition, **CLC** offers librarians a place to expand their professional growth, share ideas, collaborate on projects, and find assistance for supporting initiatives. They provide newsletters, webinars, roundtables, training sessions, and conferences on a wide variety of topics. As well as facilitating the sharing of information and job postings to fill library positions with qualified candidates.

The failure to adequately fund **CLC** next year would have an adverse impact on our ability to continue to provide teachers and students with the services they need. In a time of increasingly tight budgets, high demand for providing educational supports, the mandate to incorporate best practices, and not enough librarians to fill vacancies, **CLC** remains a critical cornerstone for the success of our school libraries.

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